



DYSLEXIA: CHANGING PERCEPTION FROM EDUCATION STRUGGLES TO EXCEPTIONAL ADVANTAGES

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ABSTRACT

Dyslexia generally is recognized and referred to as a learning disability and is mainly diagnosed to children. Though this mental disorder is considered to be damaging to children's early stages of learning, many people miss the flourishing opportunities that it also provides. Struggles in decoding words and basic sounds of speech can inform individuals about the long-standing negative impacts in dyslexia. Their decision into approaching art is not merely due to their individual fears in the academic field, but their existing talents. Cognitive strengths can be seen in dyslexic children rather than the many deficits' people define the mental illness as and can benefit their careers and jobs in the future. Their individual weaknesses in reading and writing are minor, but their own individual talents should be well enhanced in the academic field. This paper seeks to change others perspective of dyslexia-how it can be seen as an opportunity rather than a disorder commonly perceived as a reminder for targeted individual's learning disabilities. Their strengths in non-verbal communication are deeply investigated, having a purpose to prove dyslexia to be a positive stimulus.

KEYWORDS: Dyslexia, creativity, child, talents, strengths, communication.

INTRODUCTION

The word "dyslexia" is made up of two different parts, dys meaning not or difficult and lexia being words, reading, or language (Dyslexia and the Brain: What Does Current Research Tell Us?, 2007). Being a sub-group in learning disorders, dyslexia is a term referring to difficulty in acquiring and processing language, typically manifested in by the lack or proficiency of reading, writing and spelling. People who are diagnosed with this learning disorder experience difficulty connecting letters they see on a page with the sounds they make, making reading slow and effortful and not a fluent process for them (American Psychiatric Association, 2023).

Under the learning disorder problems (language, speech, mathematical, or motor skills), dyslexia is commonly known, being diagnosed to an individual that manifests problems in word recognition and reading comprehension—often he or she being markedly deficient in spelling and memory (Abnormal Psychology (16th Edition) by James N. Butcher Jill M. Hooley Susan M Mineka (2014-03-03), n.d.). Furthermore, research shows that children diagnosed with dyslexia can read so slowly that it would typically take them half a year just to read the same number of words other children might read in a day (Schneps, 2014b).

Their inability to understand and decipher words that might seem normal to other individuals causes excessive problems relating to their social and emotional stage. Quoted from a researcher, emotional aspects of dyslexia, anxiety depression, and poor self-image can be built (International Dyslexia Association, 2023). Fearful of the repetitive struggles in learning leads to developing negative thoughts consciously; thoughts of being inferior to others, not able to beat others' potential, the failure of being able to achieve their idealistic self. Stating that dyslexic children can eventually have these effects, it can be argued whether or not they could actually grow creatively through the education process. In other words, Dyslexia being a positive stimulus instead of the obvious concept in not meeting the same expectations with others academically.

Though this is the case, it is stated that individuals diagnosed with dyslexia are particularly creative and can form their way of thinking outside the box, able to develop and enhance their strengths mainly associated with their learning difference (American Psychiatric Association, 2023).

Hypothesis

Two hypotheses can be made regarding this topic:

Hypothesis A: Their mindsets and growth in creativity can be altered by education, but not fully strengthened due to their own emotional and mental problems.

Hypothesis B: Their mental and emotional stage does not affect how they are able to strengthen their creativity and to solve problems through thinking outside the box.

Through answering the hypothesizes, results can be discovered or made as to whether dyslexia act as a positive stimulus for approaching creativity or is basically seen as a mental illness.

Materials & Methods

Secondary research was done in collecting data about tests in proving the artistic side of dyslexics and extensive research was conducted into understanding the

advantages of the creative mind of dyslexics. Psychological experiments found in midst of the research process are as follows:

Participants in the 1st study: 74 students (34 females, 40 males) from two art schools at Goteborg University, Sweden (Department of fine arts Valand and Department of photography) and 80 students (43 females, 37 males) from the School of Economics and Commercial Law at the same university. Table 1 was described as a correlation of combined samples of dyslexic and non-dyslexic students, but also comparing two main student categories (art vs non-art participants).

Participants in the 2nd study:

(Based on research) Method 1: Collected samples of art and non-art students categorized into two investigated topics: Mean and standard deviation of the assessments and Estimates of the incidence of dyslexia according to different criteria. This is defined as a correlational study, testing them through multiple categories relating to the pronunciation of words, reading, wordchains, and self-reported dyslexic signs within the experimental group.

Based on research, another experiment was done that emphasizes dyslexic children's ability in communication. Grade 2-4th four graders, those who are diagnosed with dyslexia and those who are not, are tested. The study is mainly assessed on their originality and creativity across verbal, figural and non-verbal modalities.

Results

Study 1:

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the assessments¹

Assessment	All	Art	Non-art	
Self-report of dyslexia signs (factor scores)	0 (1.0)	-0.25 (1.08)	0.24 (0.86)	$t(394)=5.05; p<0.001$
Self-report of reading interest (factor scores)	0 (1.0)	0.13 (0.90)	-0.12 (1.07)	$t(394)=2.51; p<0.01$
Wordchains	80 (12.6)	79 (13.0)	81 (12.0)	$t(394)=0.94; n.s.$
Phonological choice	33 (8.9)	32 (8.8)	34 (8.7)	$t(394)=2.80; p<0.05$

¹Standard deviations are presented within parenthesis.

Figure 1.1: Mean and standard deviation of the assessments
Source: ResearchGate (2002)

Study 2:

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Table 2. Estimates of the incidence of dyslexia according to different criteria

	Art	Non-art	
Self-report (dyslexia signs) 1 S.D. below the mean	44 (22.7%)	17 (8.4%)	$z=3.97; p<0.001$
Self-report (dyslexia signs) 1.5 S.D. below the mean	25 (13%)	10 (5%)	$z=2.86; p<0.01$
Self-report and phonological choice 1 S.D. below the mean	17 (8.8%)	5 (2.5%)	$z=2.75; p<0.01$
Self-report, phonological choice and wordchains 1 S.D. below the mean	9 (4%)	3 (1.5%)	

own individual strengths in developing unique solutions to problems compared to other children can help them in careers stated above. Dyslexia shouldn't be seen as a fixed struggle and a comparative, but the advantages and the growth process kids can get from using their creative minds. Based on what was researched, dyslexia can act as a positive stimulus—seeing the mental illness from a whole new angle.

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